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Press CHECHU ÁLAVA



SPAIN, ARTS & CULTURE 2021





FUSION ASTURIAS 2021



Chechu Álava: "Art has power when it transcends"

By Marta Malde - March 3, 2021



















Chechu Álava / Photo courtesy of Chechu Álava



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Asturian Chechu Álava always liked to draw and that led her to study Fine Arts at the University of Salamanca. There he began to paint and never stopped doing it. He passed through Amsterdam, London, Madrid and since 2001 he has lived in Paris.











A painting like a Russian Matryoshka that holds within itself secrets. messages, treasures, glances. Or perhaps as a mirror in which each viewer meets what is inside. This is how Chechu Álava understands what can be beyond a painting. Each of his works is a little step towards a freedom in which words and also sentimentality abound. One step further from the superficial. A little closer to some place where the human and the divine meet.

-Is painting a way to access your inner world, a refuge?

-Everyone has a talent, a gift that when the person carries it out loses track of time and is not made with effort. It does not have to be related to the artistic, it can be cooking or dedicating yourself to astrophysics. This happens to me with painting. It is not a refuge, it is necessity, if I do not do it, I am not complete.



Photo courtesy of Clérin-Morin

-Art as a means to be free?

-Of course, dedicating myself to it does make me free. If we lived in a society where everyone fulfilled their talents, we would be much freer. It also has to do with the meaning of existence.

-What does it produce or how do you feel about a blank canvas?

-I really like the feeling that everything is possible, it is the opportunity to start something that touches what I never reach.

"If we lived in a society in which everyone realized their talents, we would be much freer"

-What does a woman have to have to inspire you and want to portray her?

-There are no fixed rules. It just inspires me, it's like a crush. But it can be a mix of beauty, strength, and also vulnerability. Something deeply human, but with a glimpse of what is not seen, of the divine.

-In each of them, do you also see yourself?

-Yes. Sometimes I recognize myself in his weaknesses, in his shortcomings. And at the same time their achievements serve as an example to improve myself.

"To look without prejudice, first you have to get rid of a thousand learnings, all the programming that they do to us since we were children"

-Each work of yours is a thought or feeling turned into painting?

-The painting is not thought, and I would say that it is not feeling either, I am precisely trying to get away from the sentimental ... the most difficult thing is to be on that border, on that limit, I do not want to fall into the illustrative, the superficial. And when doing figuration it is even more difficult to stay on that tightrope because I do not pretend to be narrative. Painting is a language in itself, in it words are unnecessary, they reduce. Paint is paint. There is something ineffable in her and that interests me a lot. My aesthetic experience with painting is closer to the experience we can have with music.

-In any of your works, how much more is there than meets the eye?

-I always say that the paintings are Russian dolls, there are many dolls inside each one. But the paintings are also mirrors, they reflect what each spectator carries inside at that moment. They not only depend on me, they are completed by the one who contemplates them.



FUSION ASTURIAS 2021

-Why do the women in your works always appear "behind that fog"?

-It is not premeditated, it is my skirmish with technique ... I also think that I also always had a tendency to paint like that, the image is intuited, it is not too cropped or too defined.

-How do you have to position yourself in front of a work in order to "understand" it?

-I think that you do not have to "understand" anything, again I can give the example of music, which is not asked for understanding. This is also similar to what happens with quantum physics, when someone thinks they have understood it, it means that they have not understood anything.

"Art has power when it transcends, when it connects to something that goes beyond the merely physical, the visible, when it touches that string and puts us in front of a threshold"

-Is it possible a way to look without prejudices?

-Yes, but first you have to get rid of a thousand learnings, all the programming that we do since we were children. I think I have not yet succeeded.

-In these times, in which people often talk more about the negative than about anything else, what should art mean or be for society?

-I don't know. I don't think in terms of "art." I live my need to paint, simply. It is something very intimate and personal, closely related to the meaning of my life. But if I tried to analyze it, I think that in general art is a very clear reflection of the society in which we live, in our current case it reflects a very materialistic, competitive, individualistic society, etc. The art market is frequently a pantomime, also many works seem to me that they are not up to anything. Everything goes hand in hand, society and art are alike.

"For the work to happen, it must disappear, the individual disappears, the creator vanishes"

-What is the power of art?

-Art has power when it transcends, when it is connected to something that goes beyond the merely physical, the visible, when it touches that rope and puts us in front of a threshold... I don't know how to explain it.

-Many works have transcended time and their own creators, what does a work have to have for this to happen?

-It is a good question, surely it has many answers. With ancient art many times I have felt the state of presence of the person who created it. You can't do some sublime art and be thinking bullshit. At the same time, for the work to happen, it must disappear, the individual disappears, the creator vanishes. It is a coming and going, being and not being. There is a mixture of love, beauty, pain, many things, but they have to be authentic. It does not depend on the theme, or the technique, or the two things together, it is a mystery.

-Are you the painter you want to be?

-Not at all. I would like to be a much better painter. I'm trying.



Chechu Álava: The Restless Muses

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BravinLee is very pleased to present the "The Restless Muses," 10 new paintings by Chechu Alava. Alava was born in Spain and lives and works in Paris. She recently enjoyed a one-person exhibition at the Museo Thyssen Bornemisza.

Artists on show

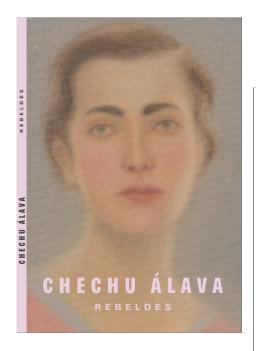
CHECHU ALAVA

We first saw Chechu's amazing paintings at my friends Espacio Líquido Gallery in Gijón Spain. Paintings are stubborn things. There is a lasting ache from falling in love with art and Chechu's work stayed in my thoughts and the pit of my stomach for years. Timeless art hurts good.

When in the twentieth century some people proclaimed the death of painting, the truth is that they were announcing an impossibility. Painting lives and manifests itself since the time of the caves precisely because we do not create it, but because it goes through us. The painter is its spokesperson, its conductor.

Cob.

REBELDES: THYSSEN-BORNEMISZA 2020





This exhibition of the work of Asturian painter Chechu Álava is the third to be staged as part of Kora, a programme curated by university lecturer Rocio de la Villa and focusing on Spanish women artists of today. Like the previous shows, it is centred on women as creators and on the urgent need to overcome the resistance of museums as patriarchal institutions. This time the medium is painting and Alava presents us with an extraordinary picture gallery of women—nearly all of them artists and writers who share the trait of rebelliousness—together with the mythological Venus and Eve, handled with a delightful irony. Each of these figures is a world in itself and, at the same time, a fragment of the painter's own, highly personal world. As the curator points out in her essay in this catalogue, Chechu Álava paints these figures in her characteristic hyperfeminier style, which brings together everything that misoglynous critics have always scorned in paintings produced by women (a small format, pastel colours, an intimate atmosphere...) and turns it into something fascinating; it seems incredible that paintings that are so unshowy, so gentle and delicate, can convert exchibitors expense.

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the collectors who have contributed to this exhibition by lending their paintings, especially the galleries owners Nuria Fernández and Baylon Sandri; the show's curator Rocio de la Villa; the coordinator Laura Andrada for her excellent work; and above all the artist herself for her paintings and for her enthusiastic and generous dedication to this project.

Guillermo Solana Artistic director, Museo Nacional





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Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza Chechu Álava. Rebels



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Chechu Álava Chechu Álava. Rebels January 27 - March 29, 2020

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Las heroínas de Chechu Álava

El Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza reúne 16 retratos de mujeres como Frida Kahlo, Anne Sexton o Marga Gil Röesset en 'Rebeldes'

SAIOA CAMARZANA 28 enero, 2020











Simone de Beauvoir, 2019

La suya es una pintura de veladuras, de detalles desenfocados donde vemos imágenes de mujeres solitarias. El uso que hace de los colores pastel es una característica y una opción tomada a conciencia. "Lo sorprendente de la obra de Chechu Álava es ve cómo atenuando los detalles consigue intensificar la sensación que transmite", considera Guillermo Solana, director del Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, donde se reúnen 16 trabajos de la pintora bajo el título de Rebeldes.

La dedicada a Álava (Piedras Blancas, Asturias, 1973) es la tercera exposición del programa Kora, que a partir del mito de la primera retratista de la historia del arte relatado por Plinio el Viejo plantea dar visibilidad a artistas vivas. La primera edición la protagonizó Paloma Navares y la segunda corrió a cargo de Cristina Lucas y Eulàlia Valldosera. En esta ocasión, el protagonismo se lo lleva una pintura que guarda una visión "ginocrítica", sostiene Rocío de la Villa, comisaria de la propuesta. Por eso "recurre a todo aquello que la historia del arte, desde el siglo XIX, achacaba como defecto a las mujeres artistas". Es decir, escenas "delicadas protagonizadas por mujeres o niños, el uso de colores apastelados y la falta de proporción en las figuras".

ÚLTIMAS NOTICIAS

'El buen patrón', 'Reves de la noche' y 'Venga Juan' lideran las nominaciones a los Feroz

Víctor Erice reflexiona sobre la figura del escultor Jorge Oteiza

Nélida Piñon: "El apogeo de la tecnología ha provocado un arrogante desprecio por la tradición"

'Marvel's Guardians of the Galaxy', rock

Joaquín Reyes: "Si dices lo que te da la gana, asume las consecuencias"

Cuando uno entra en la sala dedicada a Rebeldes se encuentra, de frente, con un retrato de Freud tratando a una joven que aparece tumbada en un diván. Se trata de la única presencia masculina en la sala ya que las obras de Chechu Álava retratan a Frida Kahlo de niña, a Eva Hesse tumbada en un sofá, a Sylvia Plath con cara de angustia, a Anne Sexton fumando y tapándose la cara con la otra mano, a Marga Gil Röesset de frente o a Simone de Beauvoir leyendo sobre el césped.

El objetivo principal es reflexionar sobre el género del retrato a través de una selección de personalidades complejas, de singular talento y a contracorriente, a menudo juzgadas en el mundo de hombres en el que intentaron hacerse un hueco. En este sentido, todas son "heroínas para las jóvenes generaciones que aprenden de sus experiencias y resiliencia". Para Álava sus musas, a las que "agradece" que hayan "abierto las puertas para que las mujeres hoy en día estemos donde estamos", desafiaron a la sociedad patriarcal.

Para esta serie de retratos, que arrancó hace ya una década y ha reunido también a Eva y a Venus, Álava parte de fotografías de estas mujeres. En ocasiones aparece una pareja, como la que forman la pintora Frida Kahlo y la fotógrafa Tina Modotti, o mujeres en solitario como Camille Claudel, Hannah Arendt o Colette. Para ello, en ocasiones recurre a imágenes muy conocidas de estas mujeres mientras que en otros casos, selecciona alguna que rara vez se ha visto. En cualquier caso, sus retratos evocan recogimiento y vulnerabilidad en situaciones íntimas y solitarias. Pero también, como dice Rocío de la Villa, son presencias inspiradoras.

Inspiradoras porque estas mujeres "nos han abierto las puertas", afirma Chechu Álava. Por eso, que Frida Kahlo "esté viva o muerta no importa". En su totalidad, estas mujeres le han servido "de faro y de guía para seguir". Además, la muestra desborda la sala en la que se reúnen estos retratos para dialogar con las piezas de la colección permanente del museo. Así, Sov rebelde se encuentra entre Franzi ante una silla tallada y Desnudo de rodillas ante un biombo de Kirchner, Day Dreaming Girl junto a Atardecer de Munch, Frida fumando en rosa junto a Quappi con suéter rosa de Beckmann y Virgin Girl al lado de La virgen de la aldea de Chagall.



EL SALTO 2020



In the workshop with Chechu Álava

At the beginning of 2020, the exhibition of the Asturian painter Chechu Álava *Rebeldes* could be seen at the Thyssen Bornemisza Museum in Madrid . A summary of ten years portraying dissident women.

We visited his workshop in Paris.





Guillermo Rivas Pacheco 26 JUN 2020 06:00 In Chechu Álava's portraits, it is difficult to know if the characters have just appeared on the scene or if they are going to disappear with a snap. That mystery is accompanied by a creative universe where perspective and tones may seem naive, but they serve to emphasize the extreme fragility of those portrayed.

At the beginning of this year, the Thyssen Bornemisza Museum in Madrid proposed to Chechu Álava to exhibit his work in its rooms. Rebeldes thus collected ten years of portraits of dissident women. In total, twenty paintings: nineteen women, anonymous or known; and a man, Sigmund Freud in his office. The exhibition, which opened to the public on January 27 and could be visited until the covid-19 wanted it, was a good sample of one of the main themes of Chechu Álava's painting: the continuous struggle of women to find stability in a hostile world.

Trained at the Faculty of Fine Arts in Salamanca, after passing through Amsterdam, London and Madrid, the Asturian painter Chechu Álava (Piedras Blancas, 1973), has been established in Paris since 2001. In the French capital, his studio is a relatively small room in a highly unlikely location on the outskirts: a former Téléphonie Française factory, more like a squatter than the postcard workshops that tourists visit. A still affordable space that survives by chance as an artists' studio in the gentrifying whirlwind of Paris.

"I have always adapted my way of painting to the conditions that I had: in Salamanca I used to make very large formats because I had a workshop, in London I drew notebooks in my room and just arrived in Paris, I didn't even have a room for myself," recalls Álava. His style has consequently evolved from figurative pop elements and landscapes and interiors, to the portraits he takes today.

"I agree with what Virginia Woolf says that to find your voice you have to have a room of your own"



Within his work, these last years are marked by the portraits that could be seen in the Thyssen exhibition: blurred women, as seen through a blanket of haze. Paintings that, for Álava, are different prisms of her own self-portrait: "It is a way of understanding myself because I paint women who complete me and who make us, in the end, all be one".

As for many others, confinement was an extra job for Chechu Álava, locked in her S8-square-meter apartment along with her husband and two daughters. She confesses that it was hard because, because of the way she works, she needs to spend time alone, and at home it was difficult to get creative. "I agree with what Virginia Woolf says that to find your voice you have to have a room of your own," she says.



Fairies and princesses in Piedras Blancas Chechu Álava was born in 1973, in Piedras Blancas a domitory town for workers in

That is why one day he ran away. His head asked him to mix two ideas that were around him at the time: the loneliness of people during confinement and what the stage of puberty means. In a deserted Paris, Alava walked the barely two kilometers that separate her from her studio and began to paint: "I turned everything into a version of Edvard Munch's Puberty painting"."

Election Awa was born in 1975, in Precias Blancas, a dornitory town for workers in the industrial zone of Avilés. As he recalls, "it is a very curious place where many talented people have come out, from opera singers to television presenters." During the 80s, his parents were very involved with the groups of parents of students and promoted extracurricular activities such as dance, music, painting or karate classes so that culture and leisure reached everyone, not just the elities: "They were made with a collective spirit and a symbolic price, almost free, because we were all children of workers."

Chechu Alava. TERESA SUAREZ ZAPATER

Álava began painting in those courses as a child Crather playing with crayons, making war", according to her), in an old house in Piedras Blancas. He drew fairies and princesses everywhere, even in the granaries he put a princess. As you can read in the book Family Portrait that the Valey Cultural Center made about Chechu and his brothers (the painter Juan Fernández Álava and the journalist and filmmaker Luís Argeo), during an exhibition, in 2009, Chechu met the professor of drawing from his childhood, the painter Ramón Rodríguez, who told him that so many years later he was still painting "fairies and princesses". "Who knows, maybe in

another life I was one of the Romanovs", jokes Álava. "I conceive of art as passing a witness. We influence each other "



Frida Kahlo, Lee Miller, Marga Gil Roësser, Eva Hesse, Anne Sexton, Sylvia Plath, Simon de Beauvoir, Camille Claudel, those famous but also anonymous "fairies and princesses" engaged in dialogue at the Rebels exhibition with paintings from the Thyssen's permanent collection: Frida smoking with Quappi in a pink Max Beckmann sweater, Marc Chagall's Virgin of the Village transfigured into a teenager in jeans, a dreamy woman who has a glancing conversation with the dril from Munch's Surset.

In this sense, Chechu Álava defines her work as a series of matrioskas where each painting includes multiple readings: spiritual, feminist, meta-artistic. "For me, there is no progress in the history of art. Or not, at least in a straight line, but more like a spiral, "he says. For this reason, during his training he learned by copying the paintings of those who had come before: "I conceive of art as passing a witness because none of us paint out of nowhere, we influence each other," he says.

Capes and crutches

"Oil painting is unsurpassed", confesses Álava. In his small studio on the outskirts of Paris, light filters through two large windows, vestiges of when the workshop was a factory office. Oil is pure alchemy for her, a pigment that transcends and that brings a thousand possibilities to the painting: "The flamingos, when they began to take portraits, used oil for the nuances it has, such as being able to paint the skin, the brightness of an eye or the shell of an egg".

Álava has made the glaze of oil his personal signature. The glaze is a pictorial technique where very thin layers of paint are superimposed that soften the colors and increase the luminosity of the painting. "It was taught to me by a Brazilian who was a copyist at the Louvre and when I told him I was a painter, he looked at me a bit like over his shoulder," he says. Working with glazes means waiting two or three days for one layer to dry before adding the next: "In the end, my paintings end up having a lot of layers. So within the same work, there are several paintings", he adds.

"It is not premeditated that I almost do only women, it comes naturally to me. Because I need to have an empathy with the painting so that it vibrates and is authentic"







De Chechu Álava os hemos hablado en masdearte hace muy poquito, con motivo de su participación en dos colectivas que recordamos entre nuestras preferidas últimamente (la que presentó obras de la

colección DKV en el contexto de los espacios históricos del Museo Lázaro Galdiano a finales de 2016 y la que abordó la huella de lo espiritual en el arte actual en la Sala Juana Francés de Zaragoza, coincidiendo con la celebración del quinto centenario del nacimiento de santa Teresa de Jesús hace dos años), pero su curriculm es muy extenso; ha presentado individuales en la Galería Espacio Líquido gijonesa, la Nueveochara Gallery de Bogotá, Utopía Parkway (Madrid), la Triple Base Gallery de San Francisco o la Sala Borrón de Oviedo; en numerosas colectivas (en espacios como La Casa Encendida, la Fundación Caja Murcia, el Museo Barjola, el Palacio de Revillagigedo, Luis Adelantado o el Instituto Cervantes de París) y también habéis podido conocer su obra en ferias como ARTE SANTANDER, ARCO, ESTAMPA, Art80 o PULSE Miami.

Se licenció en Bellas Artes en la Universidad de Salamanca, fue premiada en el Certamen Nacional de Pintura de Luarca (1994) y en el que convoca en la misma modalidad el Principado de Asturias (2008) y a día de hoy Chechu Álava ha logrado que reconozcamos sus obras en un primer vistazo gracias al sello personal de sus pinceladas suaves y de unos retratos (que no lo son del todo, como ella nos contará) sumidos en una atmósfera entre el misterio y la melancolía, la calma y la inquietud. Tienen algo de onírico y parecen situarse a una distancia segura de lo exterior y lo material, como si brotaran tanto del subconsciente como de la observación.



Chechu Álava. Femme Animal, 2012

A Chechu, como al resto de nuestros fichados (hace tiempo pasó por esta sección su hermano, Juan Fernández Álava), le hemos preguntado cómo fueron sus comienzos: Siempre recuerdo haber dibujado, desde que era niña, y siempre fue un placer. Era algo innato. A pintar empecé en la Facultad de Bellas Artes y nunca más lo dejé. En realidad no me gusta mucho liamario "trabajar". Lo que si recuerdo es cuando decidi abandonar los trabajos basura para sobrevivir. Fue como el "salto de fe" de Indiana Jones, que pone el pie nel vacío antes de que aparezca el puente, sin tener nada garantizado. Y funciona.

En su caso lo ha hecho. Como avanzábamos, en su producción encontramos fundamentalmente retratos, pero retratos que son cosmos por sí mismos y de los que podemos extraer algo más que interpretaciones múltiples: este género es su vía para acercarse a asuntos íntimos y trascendentales que escapan a clasificaciones temáticas, hay algo en estas pinturas de una búsqueda de identidad derivada de una actitud de extrañeza o asombro ante el entorno. Predominan los retratos femeninos, y nos explica por qué: Toda pintura es como una "matrioska", una muñeca rusa dentro de otra muñeca rusa La

pintura tiene su propia gramática y a través del color, del gesto, las lecturas son infinitas.

Mis cuadros no son exactamente retratos, pero a través de esa temática intento tocar una cuerda sensible. Yo misma no sé del todo cómo funciona. Tal vez intento representar la vida, mi visión de ella. Pero los cuadros, más que representar el mundo, son mundos en sí mismos.

En mis pinturas suelen aparecer personajes femeninos porque es lo que me resulta más cercano. Me atrae y fascina la idiosincrasia de la mujer. En realidad pinto como cuando era niña, por amor. Pero los temas que más me interesan no sé si se percibe ne mi obra. El misterio de la vida y de la muerte, del Universo, la noción de "realidad" en la física cuántica... es sobre lo que más leo y más me intriga, desde un punto de vista sobre todo espiritual.



la gran

Chechu Alava

By Elena Fernández Prada



Chechu Álava (Piedras Blancas, Asturias 1973) is an artist with a degree in Fine Arts from the University of Salamanca who currently resides in Paris. She is probably the Asturian artist with the greatest international projection; in fact, it has recently been selected by the Thames & Hudson publishing house to be included in the publication * 100 painters of tomorrow *.

Alava is eminently a painter and, in her paintings, the density of a nebula can be appreciated that brings us closer to the aura of the portrayed -faces recognizable to many-, as well as takes us away from them with surprise, introducing a sinister fissure in the backwater that she achieves, create.

In his pieces, however, one breathes peace, the tranquility of a moment stopped without haste, of a thoughtful moment. Possibly from a reflection on the artist's own subjectivity, who never stops looking for herself in her pieces.

interview with Chechu Álava

I have observed in your work that you establish a difference in process and theme between drawings and paintings. The drawings seem taken from everyday photographs, taken on trips, walks, day to day with friends. The paintings are seen to be largely based on photos taken from the media, from history, they are portraits of writers, artists, people who in one way or another are attractive to you. Why do you make this difference? Does it have to do with the treatment, with what each medium offers you?

I think the drawings you have seen are from a time before paintings, and at that time I was working in a different way. But I always find the difference between drawing and painting very interesting, the process is usually very different. At least I have a relationship of a different nature with each medium. Drawing is more immediate, sometimes it is a way of finding ideas that suddenly appear as a surprise. Sometimes they tell me, according to what I experience when making them, that a painting can later come out of that image. Other times it is better that they remain as a drawing, because there is something unrepeatable in them.

There is an aspect in your way of presenting the figures that I associate with the image of the automaton, of the doll; a certain rigidity of the pose, together with the softness of the forms and the smoothness of the surfaces, a disproportionate head, thin and small trunk and limbs, large and wide-open eyes, frontality ... It reminds me of some children in Goya's family portraits, or the treatment of characters in tapestry sketches. There is a certain conventionality in the way of presenting the figures, as if they were on stage. Are you interested in this aspect of strangeness close to the sinister?

Goya, what an eye, Elenal I have had a catalog of Goya paintings open in my studio for a long time, always present by my side when I paint. It inspires me so much! Especially his portraits. But I'm not looking for the sinister. Old painting, under our current gaze, may be bizarre or sinister, but to me it is not. On the other hand, I am interested in the notion of strangeness in that everything, if we observe it carefully, is absolutely strange, unusual and even miraculous and confronts us with the abyss of existence.

On the other hand, I perceive in many of your works (especially in painting) a suggested load of sexuality, many times associated with the childish, that plays with ambiguity, just as there is a certain lack of definition of gender, as in the piece Niña Kid. I think this is what has made me associate your work with Balthus. What do you think of this painter? Is the issue of ambiguity a relevant aspect in your work? Are you concerned about gender roles in this sense?

Balthus is another one of my beacons. I like very much. And the theme of ambiguity attracts me enormously, because I think that everything overlaps, nothing is completely black or white. For example, I believe that we all have feminine and masculine energies in our being that manifest with greater or lesser intensity at different stages of our life. Sometimes the line that separates them becomes thinner according to age, or it is more marked according to the hormonal moment. For example, in the elderly, many times only the clothes make it appear that they are a man or a woman.

That was present in the painting "Niña Niño", I was interested in reflecting that moment of prepuberty in which the body is so similar.

In any case, the gender issue is complex. We are different and we are the same. And when I dive deeply into myself, for example practicing meditation, there I am no longer a man or a woman, nor Chechu Álava, but pure life that vibrates, and at the same time I am closer to my true self, something greater than what is seen on the material surface or in appearances. We are like layers of onion, and some characteristics dissolve as we go deeper and deeper.

What is the meaning of blur in your paintings? Does it have to do with this ambiguity? Do you want to generate a certain atmosphere?

There are formal issues in painting that come out "in spite of me." One of them is the blur you mention. It arose when trying to paint in layers like the old masters. He also sought to paint the air that surrounds us, as well as corporeity. And everything merged ... I think I see reality like that, like a quantum soup where everything is united and there are no marked lines that separate one thing from another. But maybe the next frames will come out sharper, I don't know.

You obviously take a lot from the classical tradition of painting. What artists are important in your work? And what writers and writers interest you?

The influences have evolved according to my life stages. These last years Goya and Velázquez are pure magic for me, but there are so many that fascinate me, actually the whole history of painting... At the time of the Faculty of Fine Arts I needed to discover women artists and above all I was looking at contemporary art. Finding older sisters was important to me and continues to be so, as they help me get to know myself. The same thing happens with literature, I have followed a very diverse journey. When I came to Paris I read a lot of the 19th century, Proust, Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky... And lately everything related to life and death, spiritual questions, thinkers like Krishnamurti, Karlfried Graf Dürckheim... Before I read more about Art, now less.



In your painting there are portraits of writers, actresses and artists. With what criteria do you choose them? Are you interested in his work, its appearance or do you perceive a relationship between the two?

The starting point when choosing an image is usually a crush, a "coup de foudre" and has more to do with intuition than with something mental or rational. There is an empathy, a feeling related to love. This can arise simply because of the beauty or because of the history or personality of the character. They can be famous or anonymous people. There are people I meet on the subway for a few minutes who inspire me, without knowing why. Other times they are born in the painting itself, from an image that is distorted and takes on a life of its own.

In the Sisters exhibition you present yourself in the context of these portraits of women. Do you feel an affinity, a link or an identification with them, considered as a group? Is the feminine a relevant category in your thinking? Do you consider yourself a feminist?

I feel a closeness to these women and I feel that they are in me, just as we are all interconnected. That is why I consider them as older sisters. And above all I experience a deep gratitude towards those who in one way or another were opening doors. That the feminine sprouts in my work is inevitable, it is in my nature, it is inherent to me and I simply let it shine, I do not need it to be premeditated.

Of course, I consider myself a feminist because feminism first of all defends equal rights and freedoms between men and women, it is pure social justice. I also believe that our future as humanity depends on that balance, and it is time to give way to the feminine.

In your work there is a strong presence of melancholy, boredom, also a literary and cinematographic component. Do books and movies help you identify and, so to speak, enact those feelings?

I can be influenced by a novel, a poem, a movie ... creativity is born from so many things ... I don't think I'm the one that generates it from nothing, but rather it is a resonance with something, again everything is interconnected. That is why I titled one of my individual exhibitions "Ariadna's Thread", because I feel like I'm pulling on a thread that others have laid for me. You just have to follow the breadcrumbs on the way.

Paris seems the ideal place for the development of these ideas. Are the appearance of these issues related to your stay in that city, or was your transfer a lucky coincidence?

I decided to come to Paris twelve years ago after tossing a few coins into the air, which is an equally valid way of making decisions as another. I did not come for contemporary art, since it is not a city that is currently at the fore in that sense, which does not really worry me. It is a beautiful city, so beautiful that you forgive its harshness. Yes, surely its aesthetics have been marking that of my work, and also the fact that Paris continues to feed on its past.

Photography, as a trace of the fleeting moment, is associated with the disappearance of the motif. Does the sense of loss and the nostalgia that this entails have to do with your use of old photographs, such as the portraits of the Romanovs?

There are old photographs that directly catch me. It happened to me when I came across the Romanov girls. I started to paint them and the hand went alone, that happens very rarely. I relate to past figures without differentiating whether or not they live in the present. The emotion is such that there is no time or distance.

Very often, I search the Internet for images that I later use to paint, which for me has the advantage of speed and ease when it comes to accessing visual documentation. I also use Photoshop to make digital collages that I later reproduce with paint. How do you locate the photographs from which you start? Do you subject them to any kind of manipulation before painting them?

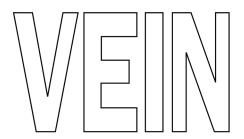
I take a lot of photos, although I have never shown them as my work, and some drawings and paintings come out of them. And on the other hand, I also like to surf the Internet and let one image lead me to another in a random way, it is something that generates many discoveries. About six years ago, when I started doing portraits, I would take the arms of one image, the face or legs of another and also make my frankenstein with Photoshop... Other times I don't manipulate them.

I also use the Internet to search for documentation of subjects and artists that interest me, to disseminate my work and to be in contact with artists and other people related to art. What is your relationship with the web in that sense? Do you use social networks?

The Internet is a great, wonderful bottomless pit, although you have to know how to drink from it so that it does not absorb or saturate you. It does not replace the joy and silence of the workshop or the pleasure of a book, but I value like you the possibility it offers to connect and the great wonder that everything is there. Grandmother Margarita, a wise Mexican woman, guardian of the Mayan tradition, says "My ancestors left us grandparents the custody of knowledge, because a day will come when it will be shared again in open circles."



2020



'REBELDES': THE PICTORIAL TRIBUTE TO THE FEMALE GENDER PROMOTED BY CHECHU ÁLAVA

02/03/2020

BY DAVID ALARCÓN

From the first woman on the face of the earth, Eva, to the writer and philosopher Simone de Beauvoir, through Frida Kahlo or Camille Claudel. The Asturian artist portrays and celebrates the great women of history through painting.

Soft and soft brushstrokes, powdery colors and a nostalgic atmosphere full of emotion that refers to the world of dreams. The Asturian artist <u>Chechu Álava</u> is characterized by printing a recognizable personal stamp on each and every one of her works. Included in the prestigious publication '100 Painters of Tomorrow' by the <u>Thames & Hudson</u> publishing house, recognized as **one of the 100 artists with the most projection of the 21st century** worldwide, **Álava** shows a predilection for the representation of female characters. "I am attracted and fascinated by the idiosyncrasies of women. In my paintings women usually appear because it is what is closest to me "he confesses.

The American writer and poet Sylvia Plath, the versatile artist Margarita Gil Roësset (belonging to the Generation of 27) or the winner of the 1967 Pulitzer Prize for poetry, Anne Sexton, are some of the women portrayed by the original Piedras Blancas creator, Asturias. Based in the French capital, Álava has participated in many individual and group exhibitions throughout her career, exhibiting her work in galleries and museums around the world. The Triple Base Gallery in San Francisco, La Casa Encendida in Madrid or the Smac Gallery in Johannesburg are a small sample of this.

THE UC SAUR I HAVE AND THE PURALTURE, 2010

Now, it is the <u>Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum</u> that bets on the artist, touring part of her work with a unique exhibition. 'Chechu Álava. Rebeldes', the small-format exhibition dedicated exclusively to the Spanish creator, collects some of her identifiable female portraits in which she celebrates the imaginary life of ancient myths and the experience of eminent women in modernity. From the figures of Eva and Venus to intellectuals like Simone de Beauvoir, an openly feminist writer who dedicated her life to fighting for women's rights and freedom. They and many more, like Eva Hesse or Tina Modotti, shape 'Rebeldes', the open series that Álava began a decade ago and for which the Madrid art gallery is committed, an essential stop on the circuit popularly known as 'Paseo del Arte'. Women whose life was not exactly easy, but who claimed what belonged to them, forging a better future for the next generations and leading risky movements in their time.

'Chechu Álava. Rebeldes' is the third installment of the Kora program promoted by the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum. An initiative inaugurated in 2018 with the exhibition 'Paloma Navares. The garden of memory', which presents an annual exhibition approached from a gender perspective. Born with the firm purpose of promoting and making female art visible, relegated to the background throughout history, the Kora program has established itself as one of the leading platforms in the uncompromising defense of the talent of women artists. The exhibition led by Chechu Álava is understood from the balcony-viewpoint on the first floor of the museum to other rooms of the permanent collection, integrating effectively with the space.

The exhibition can be visited **until March 29, 2020** (Monday: from 12.00 to 16.00 / Tuesday to Sunday: from 10.00 to 19.00). In addition, on **Thursday February 27 at 5:30 p.m.**, Chechu Álava and Rocío de la Villa, artist and curator of the exhibition, will offer a free-admission **talk-colloquium** (until full capacity is reached).





THE MUSES AND HEROINES OF CHECHU ÁLAVA AT THE THYSSEN MUSEUM

The monographic exhibition of the Asturian painter is included in the third installment of the Kora program, where the museum makes visible the work of an active formule artist

'Rebeldes' is the third exhibition that the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum presents included within the Kora program - named after the mythical first portrait artist - which proposes an annual exhibition in the Madrid museum from a gender perspective.

The first two installments. Patriarcado: Cristina Lucas / Eulàlia Valldosera in 2019 and Paloma Navares. From the memory garden in 2018, they had pieces further from the traditional Fine Arts, such as performance, video art or installation. Instead, this year it has been figurative painting that carries the weight of the feminist reflection discourse.

Both Guillermo Solana, director of the institution, and Rocio de la Villa, curato of the exhibition and professor of Aesthetics and Art Theory at the Autonomous University of Madrid, have expressed their satisfaction at being able to count on an artistic discipline so close to the Museum.

Most of the canvases portray women famous for their intellectual activity and, to a lesser extent, mythical figures who embody other facets of traditional femininity. In this repertoire we can find Lee Miller, Hannah Arendt, Niki de Saint Phalle or Eva. The only man who stands among all of them, and who has a position of honor in the room - not without criticism and irony - is Sigmund Freud.

To the 16 pieces that hang in the balcony-viewpoint room -which hosts other small-format exhibitions during the rest of the season- there are another 4 distributed throughout the rest of the rooms of the permanent collection. There, they dialogue with works such as Atardecer by Edvard Munch, Frânzi before a carved chair by Ernst Kirchner or The Virgin of the village by Marc Chagall. The contraposition of the works is based on a common theme or motif. Thus Virgin Girl, from Alava hangs next to Chagall's canvas, or Frida smoking in pink confronts. Quappi in a pink Max Beckmann sweater.

Álava's technique consists of light glazes and diffuse contours and is combined with the generally reduced dimensions of the canvases. According to Guillermo Solana, "his work has to do with not being ostentatious, showy or raising his voice. The more restraint you see on his canvases, the more vigor they acquire. There is great experimentation even in the simplest and smallest, an intensity that surpasses the loudest expressionism.

On February 27, a meeting between the curator and the artist will be able to be attended in the museum's auditorium, where they will discuss the exhibition. The exhibition will remain open to the public until March 29.



Lee Miller with a headache, 2013. Oil on canvas, 46 x 55 cm. Private collection. Image courtesy Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza.



2020





'Rebeldes' will show the fight for free women until March 29

From Eva and Venus to the most brilliant intellectuals of the 20th century like Simone de Beauvoir or Frida Kahlo.

Female portraits of the artist from Piedrasblancas, Chechu Álava, which make up the exhibition 'Rebeldes', installed until March 29 at the Thyssen Museum in Madrid.

Until now scattered works that, for the first time, come together in the same space.

Veiled scenes, shrouded in mist in which dreams and reality mix.

Painting about rebellious women who made their dream come true and fight for a free woman.





Drafting

Tuesday, January 28, 2020

Madrid

The Thyssen-Bornemisza National Museum presents' Chechu Álava. Rebels'



This exhibition is a gallery of female portraits that celebrates the imaginary life of ancient myths and the experience of eminent women in modernity. The exhibition 'Chechu Álav. Rebeldes' at the Thyssen-Bornamisza Museum, is made up of an open series that the artist began a decade ago and that has already brought together the figures of Eva and Venus with portraits of intellectuals, writers, and artists such as Simone de Beauvoir, Hannah Arewndt , Silvia Plath, Colette, Marga Gil Roësset, Niki de Saint Phalle, Eva Hesse, Tina Modotti, Frid Kahlo, or Lee Miller. 'Chechu Álava, Rebeldes' is the third installment of the Kora program that, based on the myth of the first portrait painter in the history of art recounted by Pliny the Elder, presents an exhibition a year at the Thyssen Museum from a gender perspective.

With exceptions, in the history of art women have been portrayed as wives or muses, created to the extent of male desire. The exhibition, curated by Rocío de la Villa, offers an opportunity to reflect on the genre of portraiture, through a selection of complex personalities, of singular talent and against the current, often judged in the world of man in which they tried to become a gap...

Chechu Álava (Piedras Blancas, Asturias, 1973), graduated in Fine Arts from the University of Salamanca in 1995, received a scholarship in Amsterdam, lived in London and Madrid, and now lives in Paris; and since 1994 he has exhibited his work in individual and collective exhibitions and art fairs; a work that is part of public and private collections, both Spanish and foreign.

The exhibition 'Chechu Álava. Rebeldes' is presented in the Balcony-Viewpoint Room, of the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, in Madrid, until March 29, 2020.



LAVANGUARDIA

Chechu Álava gathers in the exhibition 'Rebeldes' 16 portraits of women in history who challenged the patriarchy

• The Thyssen-Bornemisza National Museum will host the exhibition 'Chechu Álava. Rebeldes', a gallery of female portraits made up of 16 works by the Asturian artist that recall some of the women who defied the "patriarchal society", among which are Frida Kahlo, Eva, Hannah Arendt and Venus.

DDAFTING

01/27/2020 2:52 PM | Updated 01/27/2020 3:12 PM





MADRID, 27 (EUROPA PRESS)

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The artist herself has recognized during the presentation of the sample, which can be seen until March 29 at the Madrid art gallery, that the women protagonists of her works are "the muses" who have served "as a beacon and as a guide to move forward. "as well as pioneering what women can do today.

This series that Álava began ten years ago is the third edition of the Museum's 'Kora' program which, based on the myth of the first portrait painter in the history of art by Pliny the Elder, presents an exhibition a year on the perspective of gender.

'Rebeldes' is also made up of portraits of intellectuals, writers and artists such as Simone de Beauvoir, Colette, Sylvia Plath, Lee Miller, Marga Gil Roësset, Niki de Saint Phalle, Tina Modotti and Eva Hesse, in order to make the viewer reflect. about this artistic genre through women who were judged in a world dominated by men.

All these women to whom Álava honors have in common a "difficult" trajectory marked by the defiance of the norms represented by the myths of Venus and Eva, which in the Asturian's version humorously emphasize "the traumas inflicted on women in patriarchal society".

For the artistic director of the Thyssen, Guillermo Solana, this work is a "revelation" that is added to the paintings of the Asturian artist that the Museum has in its permanent collection; while Álava has recognized that the Museum is a "privileged" place in which to show his work and that allows him to see his work in a "not so superficial" way.

REFLECTION ON THE POOR VISIBILITY OF WOMEN IN PAINTING

For her part, the researcher and curator of the exhibition, Rocío de la Villa, has confessed to feeling "excited" with this exhibition "which reflects on the lack of visibility of women in painting", while highlighting the need to show female work, current and old, in this area.

De la Villa, who considers that Álava never leaves "any detail", has highlighted the importance of the Asturian artist at the international level, as well as that "the interesting thing" about her painting lies in her point of view on the reality of feminist art. . "Chechu portrays rebels but his work goes further," he stressed.

Specifically, the researcher has highlighted Eva's portrait because her situation has been worked on a lot in the history of art and has underlined the "courage and audacity" of Álava, whom she also considers a "rebel" like those in her works.

The exhibition extends from the balcony-viewpoint on the first floor to other rooms in the permanent collection, in which the painter's works "dialogue" with some of the Museum's paintings such as' Atardecer 'by Edvard Munch and' Still Life with yellow roses' by Max Beckmann, among others.

As complementary activities to the exhibition, the Museum has organized a talk between the artist and Rocío de la Villa on Thursday, February 27 at 5:30 p.m., with free admission until full capacity is reached, as well as explained visits carried out by the volunteer group of the Pinacoteca on Mondays at 12:30 pm and on Fridays at 5:00 pm.





Art Painting

The portrait of 'Chechu Álava. Rebeldes', in the Thyssen-Bornemisza

By Juan M. Comas - January 28, 2020 🔲 0

The Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza presents, from January 27 to March 29, 2020, the exhibition Chechu Álava. Rebeldes, a gallery of female portraits that celebrates the imaginary life of ancient myths and the experience of eminent women in modernity.

It is an open series that the artist began a decade ago and that has already brought together the figures of Eva and Venus with portraits of intellectuals, writers and artists such as Simone de Beauvoir, Hannah Arendt, Sylvia Plath, Colette, Marga Gil Roësset, Niki de Saint Phalle, Eva Hesse, Tina Modotti, Frida Kahlo or Lee Miller. Chechu Alava. Rebels is the third installment of the Kora program which, based on the myth of the first portrait painter in the history of art recounted by Pliny the Elder, presents one exhibition a year at the Thyssen Museum from a gender perspective.

With few exceptions, in the history of art women have been portrayed as wives or muses, created to the extent of male desire. The exhibition offers an opportunity to reflect on the genre of portraiture, through this selection of complex personalities, of singular talent and against the current, often judged in the world of men in which they tried to find a place. Both his biography and his career were difficult. All of them were rebellious since they defied the norms represented by the myths of Venus and Eva, which in the Álava version humorously emphasize the traumas inflicted on women in patriarchal society. They are rebels and, at the same time, heroines for the young generations who learn from their experiences and their resilience.

It is that dimension of a beacon and guide for his heiresses that is appreciated at first glance in this illuminated painting thanks to the patient work of glazes. Works that in a second glance call to stop at the unfocused details and precise compositions and whose scenes, almost always solitary, evoke withdrawal and promote dialogue with their protagonists, captured in moments of carefree intimacy and vulnerability, but also of decision. More than representations, they are, in the words of the curator Rocío de la Villa, inspiring presences.





Exemplary women of Chechu Álava in the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum

January 26, 2020 🔻 0

Around twenty portraits of intellectuals, writers and artists such as Simone de Beauvoir, Sylvia Plath, Frida Kahlo or Lee Miller, made by the Asturian painter Chechu Álava, will be on display at the museum starting Monday. They are eminent and complex women, rebellious and defiant, with outstanding life and artistic trajectories, to whom Álava pays tribute with a series of canvases that she began to paint a decade ago. The exhibition is curated by Rocío de la Villa and is part of the Kora program, which each year presents an exhibition with a gender perspective on the balcony-viewpoint on the 1st floor. Admission is free.

The museum presents a gallery of female portraits by the artist Chechu Álava (Piedras Blancas, Asturias, 1973) that celebrates the imaginary life of ancient myths and the experience of eminent women in modernity. It is an open series that Álava began a decade ago and that has already brought together the figures of Eva and Venus with portraits of intellectuals, writers and artists such as Simone de Beauvoir, Hannah Arendt, Sylvia Plath, Colette, Marga Gil Roësset, Niki by Saint Phalle, Eva Hesse, Tina Modotti, Frida Kahlo or Lee Miller. The exhibition extends from the balcony-viewpoint on the first floor to other rooms in the permanent collection, where the artist's works interact with the museum's paintings.

Chechu Alava. Rebels is the third installment of the Kora program that, based on the myth of the first portrait painter in the history of art recounted by Pliny the Elder, presents one exhibition a year at the Thyssen Museum from a gender perspective.

On February 27, at 5:30 p.m., the artist and the curator of the exhibition, Rocío de la Villa, offer a talk-colloquium with free admission, until the capacity is full.



[exit-express.com]

CHECHU ÁLAVA: REBELS

EXIT EXPRESS | January 29, 2020

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Simone de Beauvoir, Hannah Arendt, Sylvia Plath, Colette, Marga Gil Roësset, Frida Kahlo, Lee Miller ... These are some of the women who star in the work of Chechu Álava y *Rebeldes*, the artist's latest exhibition at the **Museo Nacional Thyssen - Bornemisza** since last January 27. The exhibition is an ode to some of the intellectuals, writers and artists who practiced their profession against the norms represented by the outdated myths of Venus and Eva.

In addition to being rebels, these women were guides, beacons for the new generations that came after them. And they will be for those to come. For this reason, Álava carries out glazing work, giving luminosity to the different compositions that make up the exhibition. A second glance from the viewer will be enough to understand the artist's intention to evoke recollection but not silence: the unfocused details make up precise compositions, almost always lonely and fertile scenes starring women with an indelible presence.



Chechu Álava , Lee Miller with headache



Chechu Álava , Virgin Girl



Chechu Álava , Frida smoking in pink

The sample is the delivery of the annual program *Kora*. As the museum reports, "from the myth of the first portrait painter in the history of art recounted by Pliny the Elder, she introduces proposals with a gender perspective" at the institution. On Monday, February 27, at 5:30 p.m., the artist and the curator of the exhibition, Rocío de la Villa, will offer a talk-colloquium with free admission until full capacity is reached.

(*Chechu Álava. Rebeldes* . At the **Thyssen-Bornemisza National Museum** , Madrid. From January 27 to March 29, 2020)



THE NOTEBOOK 2020

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The notebook

CULTURE DIGITAL NOTEBOOK

ART

Chechu Álava: presences in rebellion

Juan Carlos Gea reviews 'Rebeldes', the individual that the Asturian painter exhibits until the end of March at the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum in Madrid, a compendium of a painting in which, as in Beckett's verse, the absence that irremissibly conceals each figure Painted , she rebels and puts herself firmly, with a subtle and contagious joy, "at the service of the presence."

PORTHE NOTEBOOK MARCH, 2020 TOMMENTS O

Chechu Álava: presences in rebellion

About Rebeldes , the individual that the Asturian painter exhibits until the end of March at the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum

/ by **Juan Carlos Gea** /

When Chechu Álava decided in 2008 to paint her friend Synneve eating a cupcake as a tribute to Marcel Proust - whom at that time she was reading with the toxic fascination that distinguishes the devout Proustien -, he realized that he was experiencing one of those moments in which painting, rather than being painted, seems to happen by itself, it flows unhindered: it happens. As usual, the model did not pose before her. Synneve was, in fact, many kilometers away from her friend's Parisian workshop and in a much less kind trance: she had just undergone a serious operation that at some point led her to a state of clinical death from which, happily, managed to recover. But neither of them knew this until some time later, when they contrasted dates and Synneve, shocked, confessed to Chechu that the colors in the palette of her hazy Proustian portrait were the same ones that she remembered having glimpsed "outside her body" in that one, borderline experience between life and death.

This other experience – degrading it to an anecdote would be very unfair – was recounted by the painter on February 27 in the auditorium of the Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, in Madrid, during her enlightening conversation with Rocío de la Villa, curator of the Kora program, which the center is dedicating to contemporary Spanish artists from a gender perspective. Both reconstructed before the public the genesis and substance of Rebeldes, the series of portraits painted in the last decade that Chechu exhibits from January to the end of March in the framework of Kora:16 of them in the temporary exhibition hall and four facing as many pieces from the permanent collection carefully chosen by the painter herself.

synneve and La Madeleine They are not part of that cabinet of insurgent women summoned for the occasion, but their wonderful story was evoked by Chechu along with a number of others equally enigmatic, unique (and very funny) in order to illustrate those "things that happen in painting" when "the hand goes alone and almost only the painting is built **; things that have nothing to do with the romantic idea of the artist as a medium or mystifications for the style, but rather with a peculiar concept and experience of painting: as such painting, as an act of painting, as a technical procedure and as an inseparable process of the rest of the experiences, not only those of the particular biography of the person who paints, but also of those brought by the flow of time and generations. Something that is only possible when, as in the case of Chechu, painting does not allow itself to be reduced to the limits of a mere object, a peculiar skill or a container or vehicle - of images, ideas, symbols, the pictorial matter itself - but configures a certain type of event and presence among the rest of the events and presences of this world (and that of others cannot be ruled out), which the painting provokes and registers at the same time.

Tribute, pantheon, genealogy, vindication

As part of the program in which it is framed, it has been insisted with all relevance from the curatorship and the very title of <code>Rebels</code> in the feminist militancy of this series that has so much of declared tribute, pantheon, genealogy and vindication. Chechu Álava's personal and artistic positions in this regard are explicit, they come from afar and are part of the ideological, cultural and even sentimental phenotype of a woman of her generation and training. Those traits had already emerged clearly in her previous work, in her London art journals permeated with a forcibly <code>underground</code> urgency - or <code>punk</code>, as she likes to say - in her 1996 <code>performanceLe sexe des arts</code> ... but what is significant is the way in which this series expresses and integrates them as part of the long production of portraits of women that Chechu began to define around 2008, and more specifically in the context of the poeticized, quintessential, transfigured reinterpretations of personalities women in history that began with his wonderful cycle about the unfortunate Romanov girls.

The untimely way in which they appeared - it would seem that by her own decision, with the same almost ecstatic fluidity with which Chechu painted Synneve and has painted so many other women - was also evoked by the painter before Rocío de la Villa: again his hand going almost at his leisure in the solitude of the workshop one cold winter Sunday, in a state of fatigue that, rather than hindering, must have favored the appearance of that delicious group portrait without a previous sketch that ended up becoming a kind of advent: so much so that, at the end, the painter decided to take it out to the patio so that the newcomers could see how the snow fell on Paris; something that, Chechu recalls, 'made them very happy' (and which, by the way, according to the collector who owns this magnificent piece has continued to happen,like the day when he was able to clearly capture the joy of the little Grand Duchesses on his canvas before the visit of the brother of his author, the also painterJuan Fernández).

Soon other female presences began to appear in the workshop, close faces or effigies sprouted from history through a thousand lateral and often random channels: photograph on the open pages of a magazine, an image found in an exhibition or in a catalog, a reading or a conversation, which became as many occasions to set in motion the event of the painting, the reception (rather than the invocation) of the presences in that vaporous state, between existence and nonexistence, so characteristic of iconography and Chechu's way of painting: Tina Modotti and Frida Kahlo , Eva Hesse , Camille Claudel and Lee Miller; Sylvia Plath and Anne Sexton; Simone de Beauvoir or Hannah Arendt , whose inquisitive face had already struck her even before she knew who she was ... And also the ancient archetypes of Eva and Venus together with anonymous young women in states of absorbed intimacy: a vaporous garland of spirits of women dislodged from their biographies and history, linked only to each other in painting and through painting. "A trail of crumbs" - that's how Chechu describes it - to orient oneself in the immense forest of lost women. Or that Thread of Ariadnathat began to wind in the exhibition of the same title in 2011 and that has been letting it unwind and re-weave itself ever since in the hands of so many equals, hidden or overshadowed in the labyrinths of oblivion, postponement or silence



Europepress / culture / exhibitions

Published 01/27/2020 15:44 CET

Chechu Álava gathers in the exhibition 'Rebeldes' 16 portraits of women in history who defied the patriarchy

MADRID, Jan 27 (EUROPA PRESS) -

The Thyssen-Bornemisza National Museum will host the exhibition 'Chechu Álava. Rebeldes', a gallery of female portraits made up of 16 works by the Asturian artist that recall some of the women who defied the "patriarchal society", among which are Frida Kahlo, Eva, Hannah Arendt and Venus.

The artist herself has recognized during the presentation of the sample, which can be seen until March 29 at the Madrid art gallery, that the women protagonists of her works are "the muses" who have served "as a beacon and as a quide to move forward. " as well as pioneering what women can do today.

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The exhibition extends from the balcony-viewpoint on the first floor to other rooms in the permanent collection, in which the works of the painter "dialogue" with some of the Museum's paintings such as' Atardecer 'by Edvard Munch and' Still Life with yellow roses' by Max Beckmann, among others.





'Chechu Álava. Rebeldes', the new exhibition at the Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza

From January 27 to March 29, 2020

The Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza presents, from January 27 to March 29, 2020, the exhibition *Chechu Álava. Rebeldes*, a gallery of female portraits that celebrates the imaginary life of ancient myths and the experience of eminent women in modernity.

It is an open series that the artist began a decade ago and that has already brought together the figures of Eva and Venus with portraits of intellectuals, writers and artists such as Simone de Beauvoir, Hannah Arendt, Sylvia Plath, Colette, Marga Gil Roësset, Niki de Saint Phalle. Eva Hesse, Tina Modotti, Frida Kahlo or Lee Miller.

Chechu Alava. Rebels is the third installment of the Kora program which, based on the myth of the first portrait painter in the history of art recounted by Pliny the Elder, presents one exhibition a year at the Thyssen Museum from a gender perspective.





EXHIBITIONS MADRID

Chechu Alava. The intimacy of the insubordinate portrait

Rosa GA, January 27, 2020

About Last entries



Pink GA Learn on the path of knowledge, watching life flourish and wither with every step I take

The artist Chechu Álava presents the exhibition 'Rebeldes' at the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum, a series of female portraits that pay homage to eminent women of modernity

From Eva to Venus, through intellectuals, writers and artists such as Simone de Beauvoir, Hannah Arendt, Sylvia Plath, Frida Kahlo, Eva Hesse and Colette, the artist Chechu Álava (Asturias, 1973) has been portraying singular women against the current for a decade. Now the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum brings them together, until the end of March, in the exhibition Rebels. A tour that includes a score of portraits that, in the words of its curator, Rocío de la Villa, are discovered as "inspiring presences".

This exhibition offers the opportunity to reflect on the genre of portraiture by changing the gaze. If in the history of male authorship art women had been portrayed as wives or muses, Álava's proposal seeks not to subordinate the female image to desire. On the contrary, it offers almost always solitary scenes, which evoke a carefree intimacy and vulnerability.

At the time these heroines that Chechu painted lived they were rebels. Of singular talent, they were often judged in a patriarchal society in which they tried to occupy their own place, not marked by social determinisms. Due to this iron decision, both his biography and his career were not easy. Like Venus and Eva, they defied established norms, hence the show's title.

Finding them today is rediscovering them. They represent a role model for new generations of women who learn from their experiences and resilience. Fixing your eyes on these works forces you to stop at the details and fill in the gaps, while we appreciate the amazing glazing work that Chechu Álava manages with precision and dedication.

The exhibition Chechu Álava. Rebeldes is part of the Kora program organized by the Thyssen-Bornemisza Museum. Based on the myth of the first portrait painter in the history of art recounted by Pliny the Elder, the museum offers one exhibition a year that seeks to give visibility to art with a gender perspective.



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The artist and her work: «Blonde» by Chechu Álava

By Santiago Martinez - November 11, 2016 • 12533









Chechu Álava before "Blonde" at the Museum of Fine Arts of Asturias. Photo:

Truth makes the fire burn and the air move, it makes the sun shine and life grow. David Lynch, Catching the big fish

Already a few years old, but it seems stopped in time, Blonde (2008) is an oil on canvas measuring 130 x 89 cm. made by the Asturian painter Chechu Álava (Piedras Blancas, 1973) that we can see in room 27 of the Museum of

The recognition of the artist and her international projection is constant. In 2013 she was chosen for the project " ers of tomorrow " where the new talents of world painting are present. From this event, the *Thames and* Hudson publishing house published a careful catalog with the selected ones. The artist has made Paris, the city in which she has lived for years, an ideal place to continue discovering and deepening the art of all times.

Until the beginning of November, together with his brother Juan Fernández Álava, he has exhibited at the Espacio Líquido gallery in Gijón. The title of the exhibition says it all: Repaint, referring to a brief parenthesis that, on the other hand, has allowed him to recharge himself with energy to resume his work with force. The title could also be understood as a new look at the classics to "repaint them"; This is the case on this occasion with Urbino's painting The Pleasure of Venus , inspired by Titian's famous canvas . In the presentation text for this exhibition, Chechu Álava comments: "looking back and trying to paint something already done but inexhaustible is one of the thousand ways

Blonde , the painting exhibited in the museum, was the first in a series of female portraits created in the unmistakable style that continues to characterize her. Work raised from a unique formal and thematic aesthetic, it seems a creature emerged from others, it is not a portrait, it is not "anyone" in particular, it is made from anatomical fragments of different models or references that germinate in this stylized image and haunting. Together with Parisienne and Blue Portrait, works made between 2008 and 2009, they form the basis of others that came later such as Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée (2010), Olympia (2011) and, more recently, Las maidens(2013-2016), paintings in which the original naked space has been incorporated, without losing its sobriety, furniture and decorative elements that instead of introducing proximity, accentuate its mysterious character, approaching the

The loss of sharpness of the image becomes a unique technique that achieves that an enveloping nebula unifies the whole. The artist comments that there are formal issues in her painting that arise naturally, and one of them is blurring: "it arose when trying to paint in layers like the old masters. He also sought to paint the air that surrounds us, as well as corporeity. And everything merged ... '

Behind its enigmatic beauty, Blonde hides a creature born from the reconstruction or sum of parts, a fascinating theme present in various moments of the plastic arts where this assessment of the fragment, as a creative source, has taken its place, it is enough to quote the romantic narrative of Mary Shelley and Frankenstein , Hannah Höch's Dadaist collages, or Self-Portraits disquised as female clichés and Historical Portraits of the photographer Cindy n. All of them gestating strange and charming creatures, new beings born with an unusual care that confront us with the abyss of existence, an approach full of romanticism, an incessant search for a truth that, as David Lynch said, "... make life grow ".





ABOUT ARTISTS

EXHIBITIONS

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100 PAINTERS OF TOMORROW LONDON 50 ARTISTS INCLUDED IN 100 PAINTERS

Private View: Thursday 27 November 2015 (6-9pm) Exhibition: 28 November – 17 January 2015

Participating Artists: JULIETA AGUINACO, CHECHU ALAVA, KRISTINA ALISAUSKAITE, MICHAEL ARMITAGE, CORNELIA BALTES, AGLAE BASSENS, EMMA BENNETT, GL BRIERLEY, SZE YANG BOO, JANE BUSTIN, CARLA BUSUTTIL, BLAKE DANIELS, ADAM DIX, DEJAN DUKIC, ZHANG FAN, MADELINE VON FORERSTER, MARC FREEMAN, NUNO GIL, PABLO GRISS, KATE GROOBEY, ANDRE HEMER, AKIRA IKEZOE, EWA JUSZKIEWICZ, JAMES KUDO, LAEL MARSHALL, TONJE MOE, GUILLERMO MORA, RYAN MOSLEY, KINGA NOWAK, SIKELELA OWEN, EMILY PLATZER, ANNA RING, RICHARD ROTH, JAYANTA ROY, JAMES RYAN, PAWEL SLIWINSKI, LUKASZ STOKLOSA, EVGREN SUNGUR, EMMA TALBOT, JIRAPAT TATSANASOMBOON, ALEKSANDER TODOROVIC, IVANA DE VIVANCO & MATHEW WEIR



100 Painters of Tomorrow @ Christies London

Beers Contemporary is extremely proud to announce the official release of a major publication, entitled, '100 Painters of Tomorrow'. Authored by Director Kurt Beers and published by the UK's leading fine art publishers, Thames & Hudson, this unique and special publication is the culmination of an extensive project to find the most exciting, fresh and up-and-coming emerging painters currently at work worldwide. The book is an intelligent, wide-ranging and exhilarating survey of largely unknown talent, selected by a distinguished international panel including: painter Cecily Brown; Director of London's Institute of Contemporary Arts, Gregor Muir; Head of Sharjah Biennale, Yuko Hasegawa, author of PHAIDON's Painting Today, Tony Godfrey; and author of PHAIDON's Vitamin P (Eds. I & II), Barry Schwabsky among others.

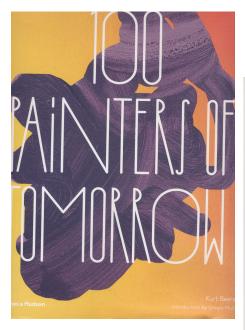
The 100 artists featured therein were gathered via an international open-call for submissions that drew over 4,300 applications from 37 countries including Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, India, Iran, Japan, Mexico, Poland, Singapore, South Africa, Turkey, the UK and the USA.

To celebrate the release of '100 Painters of Tomorrow' – a project that has been 2 years in the making – Kurt Beers and the entire team at Beers Contemporary is thrilled to be collaborating with these talented and internationally-based painters with exhibitions in London and New York. '100 Painters of Tomorrow' (London/New York) showcases a unique cross-section of painting from artists included in the publication that spans an extraordinary range of styles and techniques; abstraction to figuration, minimalism to magical realism, traditional oil-on-canvas and mixed media, to performance and installation-based painting.

Exhibiting together for the first time, the work of these artists (who range in age from 23-64) offers an intriguing insight into the state of painting today by providing personal insight into the thinking and creative practices of the 100 artists included therein.

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100 PAINTERS OF TOMORROW 2014











ART OPENING: 100 PAINTERS OF TOMORROW EXHIBITION AND BOOK LAUNCH @BEERSCONTEMPORARY THURSDAY 27TH NOVEMBER

By Mark Westall • 26 November 2014 Share – 💆 🙃 🖾

LONDON (1 Baldwin Street, London, EC1V 9NU) 28th November 17th January. 2015 www.beerscontemporary.com

To coincide with the release of 100 painters of Tomorrow (see below) Beers Contemporary opens an exhibition in London of the same name TONIGHT Thursday 27th November

Also entitled, "100 Painters of Tomorrow" the exhibitions will showcase a cross-?section of selected work by the majority of artists included in the publication.

The work of these talented painters spans an extraordinary range of styles and techniques from abstraction to figuration, minimalism to magical realism, traditional oil-?on-? canvas and mixed media, to performance and installation-?based painting.

Exhibiting together for the first time, the work of these artists (who range in age from 23-764) offers an intriguing insight into the state of painting today by providing personal insight into the thinking and creative practices of the 100 artists included therein.

List of exhibiting artists: Dale Adcock, Julieta Aguinaco, Chechu Alava, Kristina Alisauskaite, Michael Armitage, Cornelia Baites, Aglae Bassens, Emma Bennett, GL Brieriey, Sze Yang Boo, Jane Bustin, Carla Busuttil, Blake Daniels, Adam Dix, Tomory Dodge, Dejan Dukic, Zhang Fan, Marc Freeman, Nuno Gil, Pablo Griss, Kate Groobey, Andre Hemer, Akira Ikezoe, Ewa Juszkiewicz, Lael Marshall, James Kudo, Guillermo Mora, Ryan Mosley, Kinga Nowak, Sikelela Owens, Emily Platzer, Henrijs Preiss, Anna Ring, Richard Roth, Jawanta Roy, James Ryan, Andrew Salgado, Pawel Sliwinski, Lukasz Stoklosa, Evren Sungur, Emma Talbot, Jirapat Tatsanasomboon, Aleksandar Todorovic, Ivana De Vivanco, Mathew Weir.

100 Painters of Tomorrow. Authored by Director Kurt Beers and published by the UK's leading fine art publishers, Thames & Hudson, this unique and special publication is the culmination of an extensive project to find the most exciting, fresh and up-?and-?coming emerging painters currently at work worldwide.

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100paintersoftomorrow.com

The book is an intelligent, wide-?ranging and exhilarating survey of largely unknown talent, selected by a distinguished international panel including: painter Cecily Brown; Director of London's Institute of Contemporary Arts, Gregor Muir; Head of Sharjah Biennale, Yuko Hasegawa, author of PHAIDON's Painting Today, Tony Godfrey; and author of PHAIDON's Vitamin P (Eds. I & II), Barry Schwabsky among others. The 100 artists featured therein were gathered via an international open-?call for submissions that drew over 4,300 applications from 37 countries including Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, India, Iran, Japan, Mexico, Poland, Singapore, South Africa, Turkey, the UK and the USA. To celebrate the release of '100 Painters of Tomorrow' – a project that has been 2 years in the making – Kurt Beers and the entire team at Beers Contemporary is thrilled to be collaborating with these talented and internationally-?based painters in two coinciding exhibitions in London and New York.